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AIDAC, AFDROUGHT

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: HILL BRIEFING ON RESETTLEMENT

1. AID (EDELMAN, MORSE, ABRAMS, NORTH) AND STATE STAFF (GRIBBIN) BRIEFED STAFF OF SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON RESETTLEMENT ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21. JERRY TINKER OF SEN. KENNEDY'S STAFF ALSO ATTENDED BRIEFING. SUBJECT OF CRS WAS ALSO BRIEFLY TOUCHED ON. IT WAS A PRODUCTIVE SESSION.

2. MARK EDELMAN OPENED WITH OVERVIEW OF ISSUE AND UNDERLINED THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT AS TO THE AWFUL EFFECTS OF THE PMGSE FORCED RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. NUMBERS OF DEATHS CAN BE DISPUTED BUT NOT THE NATURE OF THE PROGRAM. USG OBJECTIONS TO PROGRAM, OUR EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT OUR CONCERNS AND STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH PMGSE ON THIS ISSUE WERE ALSO REVIEWED.

3. SENATE STAFFERS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT MAGNITUDE OF SUFFERING WAS UNKNOWN. THEY FEAR EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED FAILURE TO ACT OR ALTERNATIVELY POLITICAL COSTS OF OVER REACTING. THEY REPORTED THERE ARE SOME ON HILL WHO MIGHT USE RESETTLEMENT AS PRE-TEXT FOR HALTING ALL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA.

4. MARK EDELMAN STRESSED THAT NO ONE IN THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD SUPPORT SUCH AN ACTION. US AID IS CAREFULLY MONITORED AND IT IS REACHING VICTIMS OF DROUGHT INDUCED FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA.

5. GENERALLY, IT APPEARED THAT SENATE STAFFERS SUPPORTED OUR EFFORTS TO WORK PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY WITH UN, OTHER DONORS AND PVOS TO PUT PRESSURE ON PMGSE TO SUSPEND PROGRAM, IMPROVE CONDITIONS IN SITES, OPEN SITES TO MONITORING AND PRESS, ASSURE FREE MOVEMENT INTO AND OUT OF SITES, AND GIVE PRIORITY TO MOVING RELIEF FOODS. SITUATION AT GENEVA WAS ALSO TOUCHED ON.

6. SENATOR KASTEN MAY INTRODUCE REP. ROUKEMA'S RESOLUTION IN THE SENATE. THIS WOULD BE WELCOME. A HEARING ON THE ISSUE MAY ALSO BE CALLED.

7. CRS. OF INTEREST WAS OUTBURST BY ONE SENATE STAFFER THAT HE HAD HAD IT WITH CRS AND WOULD NO LONGER CONTRIBUTE TO THE ORGANIZATION. ITS UNCLEAR IF THIS

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UNFAVORABLE SENTIMENT IS SHARED BY MANY ON HILL BUT NONE  
OF THE OTHER STAFFERS PRESENT APPEARED UNCOMFORTABLE  
WITH THIS STATEMENT. SHULTZ  
END OF MESSAGE

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